4 South Tahoe men cited for illegal snowmobiling

While on patrol the night of March 2 officers found fresh snowmobile tracks directly underneath closure signs. One rider fled the scene, abandoning his snowmobile, which was towed and impounded, according the Forest Service officials.

The four snowmobilers, ages 23, 23, 45 and 52, are residents of South Lake Tahoe. They were issued notices to appear before the federal magistrate in Sacramento. Their names have not been released.

If found guilty, each could have to pay a $5,000 fine and be behind bars for six months.

“Respecting closures helps protect natural resources and reduces conflicts between snowmobilers and other winter users,” Cheva Heck, USFS spokeswoman, said in a press release. “Enforcement of closed areas plays a critical role in the Forest Service winter recreation program in the Lake Tahoe Basin.”

This is the second weekend in a row snowmobilers have been cited for riding in a restricted area.

Free maps explaining snowmobiling opportunities in the Lake Tahoe Basin are available from the Forest Supervisor’s Office, 35 College Drive, South Lake Tahoe or by by calling (530) 543.2694, or on the LTBMU’s website.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

South Bay snowboarder dies at Heavenly

By Kathryn Reed

A 31-year-old Campbell snowboarder died at Heavenly Mountain Resort from what appears to be a medical condition and not an accident on the slopes.

Michael Aron Kvalheim had been riding with his wife when he collapsed on High Five, an intermediate run.

“He had taken a couple tumbles, but nothing significant,” El Dorado County sheriff’s Lt. Les Lovell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Lovell said nothing indicates blunt force trauma played a role in the March 3 death. Results from the March 5 autopsy are pending, but Lovell expects a medical condition to surface as to why Kvalheim died.

Kvalheim was wearing a helmet.

Ski patrol was notified about 2:50pm Saturday that Kvalheim was unresponsive. He was taken down the tram to the first aid station at the base of the terminal. Heavenly officials said a doctor from Barton Memorial Hospital pronounced Kvalheim dead at the scene.

This is the third death this month involving people playing in the outdoors in and around Lake Tahoe. On March 2 a Minden man died in a snowmobiling induced avalanche. On March 1 an Olympic Valley backcountry skier died from injuries sustained in an avalanche.

U.S. Indian gaming revenue rises slightly

By Howard Stutz, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Following a one-year slide, gaming revenues produced by the nation's Indian casino market grew 1.3 percent in 2010 to $26.73 billion, the highest single-year figure ever produced by the segment of the American gambling industry.

The increase came about despite a 2.5 percent decrease in gaming revenues in California, the nation's largest Indian gaming state, and a 4 percent decline in Connecticut, the third-largest producer of Indian gaming revenues.

"The positives were that you had smaller states carrying more weight and that balanced things out," said Irvine economist Alan Meister, the author of the Indian Gaming Industry Report produced by Casino City Press. The 10th-annual look at Indian gaming numbers, facts and figures, is being released today.

The numbers cover 2010 because its takes Meister a year to gather the results. State-by-state tribal gaming revenues are not released to the public on a monthly basis as they are for the commercial casino industry.

Meister found that 2010 turned into a rebound year for Indian gaming overall after revenues fell 1 percent in 2009, the first year gaming declined in the Indian market. From 1989 through 2006, Indian gaming typically reported double-digit year-over-year gaming revenue increases.

"In the wake of the Great Recession, Indian gaming, like much of the U.S. economy, showed signs of recovery in 2010,"

Meister wrote in the report's executive summary.

In an interview Monday, Meister said the continued declines in California and Connecticut were offset by marked increases from Oklahoma, up 3.9 percent, and Washington, which reported a 7.5 percent gaming revenue increase.

Read the whole story

Political forum

The Tea Party Patriots of El Dorado Hills are hosting a candidates forum March 21 at 7pm.

Those expected to attend are Superior Court judge candidates Stephen Valentine, Joseph Hoffman and Warren Stracener, and supervisor candidates John Knight (District 1 incumbent) and challenger Ron Mikulaco, and Ray Nutting (District 2 incumbent) and challenger George Turnboo.

The forum will be at the Holiday Inn Express, 4360 Town Center Blvd., El Dorado Hills.

Reading in Carson Valley of 'EDGE'

Tahoe Writers Works will host a reading from the fifth volume of the annual literary journal "EDGE" at 88 Cups Coffee in Minden on March 10 at 1pm.

Select contributors will be on hand to sign the journal.

“EDGE” is an award-winning literary journal published each year by Tahoe Writers Works. It features provocative fiction, poetry, essays, and art, from artists both local and global.

Tahoe Writers Works is a nonprofit organization based. Each year, the group organizes events to create a stronger

literary and arts community, including Bare Bones Open Mic and Murder Mystery Theater at Valhalla.

For more information, go online.

Dream Spirit Baroque Band

Dream Spirit Baroque Band will present a concert of Celtic music in celebration of St. Patrick’s Day on March 17 from 7:30-9:30pm at the Toccata Center for the Performing Arts.

The band features a mix of instruments – violin, cello, guitar and mandolin.

The audience may sing-along to “Danny Boy” and “Whiskey in the Jar” or try the open mic with an Irish song.

Bring a dessert to share. Cover charge is $15.

The center is at 760 Mays Blvd., No. 10, Incline Village.

Transportation planner to explain loop road project

Tahoe Regional Young Professionals' development and education speaker series kicks off March 15 with Alfred Knotts, principal planner-project manager for the Tahoe Transportation District.

Knotts will present plans associated with the Highway 50 South Shore Community Revitalization Project, a proposed plan that would wipe-out a long-established neighborhood in South Lake Tahoe and in its place put a state highway.

This is locally known as the loop road project.

The idea is to make the Stateline area more pedestrian friendly for tourists, turning the current highway into a city street and the city streets locals use to bypass the casino corridor into the highway, with highway going behind Harrah's and MontBleu.

Knotts will explain how proponents believe the project will provide safety and environmental improvements, economic vitality, and enhance the community and visitor experience with reduced congestion.

The meeting is from 6-9pm at the Lake Tahoe Airport's Flight Deck Restaurant and Bar.

For more information, email TahoeTRYP@gmail.com.

Time management class for busy people

The North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce and the Truckee Donner Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Sierra Human Resources Association are offering “Time Management for Busy People: Getting Things Done in 2012” on March 13 from 9am to noon.

Registration begins at 8:30am at Cedar House Sport Hotel, 10918 Brockway Road in Truckee.

Attendees will learn how to identify timewasters and the reasons why they procrastinate, explore the reality of the demands of their jobs, discover if they are addicted to urgency, get perspective on what matters most in their lives, prioritize what is important and what is urgent, uncover their prime real estate, as well as become skillful in the 50 high-impact tips to beat the clock and time management tools.

The workshop will be lead by Laura Moriarty, president of the SHRA and co-founder of Tahoe Training Partners, which is a human resources and management-training solutions consulting firm located near Lake Tahoe, California.

Registration is $49 for chamber of commerce and SHRA members and $59 for non-members if registered before March 12. Last-minute registration runs $59 for chamber and SHRA members and $69 for non-members. Seating is limited.

To register and for more information, call Moriarty at (530) 573.0224.

Drop in skier visits brings Vail Resorts revenue down

By L. Wayne Hicks, Denver Business Journal

Vail Resorts Inc. Tuesday reported 14.6 percent fewer skier visits to its mountain resorts in the second quarter, which ended Jan. 31, and every other indicator decreased as well.

The Broomfield-based company, whose holdings include ski resorts in Vail, Breckenridge, Keystone and Beaver Creek in Colorado, and Heavenly and Northstar in California, counted 2.9 million skier visits in the quarter, off from nearly 3.4 million a year earlier.

Numbers were down for each of Vail Resort's revenue streams – mountain, lodging and real estate – pulling the company's total revenue down to $373.3 million from $395.1 million a year earlier. Vail Resorts posted a profit of $46.4 million for the quarter, off from $54.5 million in the second quarter of 2011.

Rob Katz, CEO of Vail Resorts, said in a statement that the company's Colorado resorts "have seen the lowest snowfall levels in over 30 years …" He also pointed out that Vail Resorts "reported only modest declines across our major revenue lines in what many would consider a worst-case weather scenario, which followed last season's record-setting snowfall."

Read the whole story

Expedition Man Endurance Festival

The inaugural Expedition Man Endurance Festival will be Aug. 25 throughout Northern Nevada.

This is the region’s first ultra distance triathlon.

The course starts swimmers at Zephyr Cove.

The 112-mile bike ride will utilize a variety of Northern Nevada’s scenery, including a 1,400-foot elevation drop into Carson City.

Three fast out-and-back’s around the Sparks Marina will cap off this extraordinary race.

For more information, go online.